1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SHS Tehnelche SHS

492
411
413
534
276

Figure 30.—Patagonian arms and implements. a, Bolas and sling; b, bolas; c, pole; d, sword; e, lance with spear; f, club; g, scraper; h, scraper tool; i, spear; j, spear-thrower; k, bow; l, arrow. (Bolas, club, sword, c, and j, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation; others, U.S. National Museum.)

1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SHS Tehuelche SHS

hockey (no doubt, *Arrecurrirm*). The *Tehuelche* did a great deal of recreational swimming and diving, at which they were very proficient. They, even the women, were greatly addicted to gambling at horse-racing, dice, and cards.

Music and musical instruments.—Songs were without words. The early *Tehuelche* used a bark rattle hung to the girdle when dancing (Fletcher, 1854, p. 80); the later people used a rattle of dried bladder or hide, a skin-covered drum, the musical bow (fig. 18, *h*), and (Musters, 1871, p. 77) a flute of guanaco thighbone (probably the long bone used with the musical bow). The bull-roarer and trumpet were absent. (For details on *Tehuelche* musical bow and songs, see Lehmann-Nitsche, 1908 *a*, and Fischer, 1908.)

Tobacco and alcoholic beverages.—Gambling, smoking, and alcoholic beverages were absent from early *Tehuelche* culture, before the 18th century, but later were passionately indulged in (fig. 18, *l*). A favorite procedure among smokers was to lie prone on the ground and to swallow the smoke in order to produce temporary intoxication. (Carteret, 1770, p. 23; Coan, 1880, p. 216; details in Bourne, 1858, pp. 94-95.) Many *Tehuelche* in Musters' time did not smoke or drink at all (Musters, 1872, p. 190); some did not smoke in Prichard's time (1902, p. 101). Tobacco was commonly mixed with calafate (*Berberis* sp.) wood shavings for smoking (Prichard, 1902, p. 100).

Recent *Tehuelche* held an eating and drinking feast, called malón, with dancing, during which they sang and struck their mouths rhythmically with the palms of their hands to break the song, and often with bloody fighting before the feast closed (Borgatello, 1924, pp. 20-22).

RELIGION

Our information on *Tehuelche* religion is extremely meager, superficial, and vague. Great confusion, not to say contradiction, reigns, as a result partly of cultural mixture in the Patagonian and especially Pampean region, partly of failure on the part of some otherwise excellent first-hand observers to distinguish exactly between tribe and tribe.

From out of the welter there seems to emerge pretty clearly the conclusion that the *Tehuelche* believed in a Supreme Being, looked upon as in general benevolent and good, but rather aloof and otiose. (See esp. Viedma, 1837 *b*, pp. 73, 79; Musters, 1871, p. 179; 1873, p. 202; Borgatello, 1924, p. 22.) Whether he was the Maker or moral law-giver is not clear, nor have we evidence of any cult, at least in the way of public rites. The more commonly occurring names by which he was known, although some of these may not be *Tehuelche*, are: Guayava-cumne (*Tehuelhet*, Falkner, 1774, p. 114, "lord of the dead"); Soyahn (*Tehuhet* and *Diuilhet*, ibid.; *Patapon*, Dobrizhoffer,

1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SHS Tehuelche SHS

of sickness, the evil spirit was driven away by firing off guns and revolvers, by throwing lighted brands into the air, and by beating the backs of toldos with lance shafts or bolas (Musters, 1872, p. 169; Lista, 1879 b, p. 76).

SHAMANISM

There were both male and female shamans. Transvestite shamans were reported absent in the middle 19th century (Sánchez Labrador, 1936, p. 32), but appear later, in the early 19th (Cozo, 1880, p. 136; D'Orbigny, 1835–47, 4: 220). The ordinary curing procedure included sounding of drum and calabash (Sánchez Labrador, 1936, p. 127) or hide rattle (Cozo, 1880, p. 138), and sucking out some small material object as the cause of the disease. The modern shamaness described by Borgatello (1934, p. 125) used a hand-drum in her curing rites. If the patient died, the shaman was very apt to be killed by the bereaved relatives.

The arrow-swallowing trick, observed by the Magellan expedition in 1520 at Port San Julian (Pigafetta, 1906, 1: 58; Oviedo, 1851–55, 2: 19) and by the Sarmiento expedition in 1584 near Cape San Gregorio in the Strait of Magellan (Sarmiento, [1579], 1895 b, p. 250; cf. Hernandez, [1600], 1895, p. 336), but not reported by any later observers, may have been from a shamanistic repertoire, although Pigafetta considered it a remedy for pain in the stomach. The performer, after removing the arrowhead, stuck the shaft down his throat to his stomach, and then withdrew it.

MYTHOLOGY

Our data on *Tehuelche* mythology and folklore are extremely meager. In the very brief cosmogonic note given us by Musters (1871, p. 179), the good spirit created the Indians and animals, and dispersed them from a place called "God's-hill." In Borgatello's account (1934, pp. 129–130), Heller, son of the sun, who also was called by this name, was the one who created the *Tehuelche* and gave them their land of Patagonia, and it is to Heller that the *Tehuelche* go after death. In the short Heller cycle, as reported by Borgatello, occur the Achilles and the magic flight motifs. Lista (1879 b, pp. 75–76) reported a *Tehuelche* flood story.

TIME AND LOCATION

No weights or measures are reported. Smoke signaling was much used; Borgatello (1934, p. 19) lists four distinct conventional signals. According to Sánchez Labrador (1936, p. 56), it seems that the *Tehuelche* and *Puelche*, in contrast to the *Araucanians*, did not use herbal curatives, but in the 19th century the *Tehuelche* made some use of them. (Fitz-Roy, 1839, 2: 155; Musters, 1871, pp. 181, 182;

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

175 the name of the country, Patagonia. These men used bows and arrows, and had with them four young guanacoes, with which they decoyed the wild ones within shot. Two young men were treacherously seized and carried off, howling and calling on their god Setebos. The natives naturally resented this return for their ready friendliness, and, attacking a party sent after them, killed one Spaniard with their arrows. Enough, however, was seen of them to furnish Pigafetta [36] with some details. 'Their tents were light movable frames, covered with skins; their faces were painted; they were [202] very swift of foot, had tools of sharp-edged flints, and ate [412] their meat nearly raw.'

That the first knowledge of Patagonia was diffused in England by Pigafetta's narrative is suggested by Caliban's lines in the 'Tempest': 'He could command my dam's god Setebos;' but it was not till 1578 that the newly-discovered country was visited by Englishmen.

Sir Francis Drake in that year anchored in Seal Bay—probably a little to the south of Port Desire—and saw several Indians. His chaplain narrates their method of stalking [228] the ostriches: 'They have a plume of ostrich feathers on a long staff, large enough to hide a man behind, and with this they stalk the ostriches.' He further says: 'They would have none of our company until such time as they were warranted by their god "Settaboth."' They never cut their [302] hair, which they make a storehouse for all the things they [418] carry about—a quiver for arrows, a sheath for knives, a case for toothpicks, a box for fire-sticks, and what not; they are [536] fond of dancing with rattles round their waists; they have clean, comely, and strong bodies, are swift of foot, very active, a goodly and lively people. Magellan was not alto-

2: Masters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

[537] [252] wife had a large iron pot bubbling on the fire, containing some of the blood mixed with grease. When the meat was nearly cooked, we added a little pepper and salt, and commenced the feast. Previous to this I had felt a sort of repugnance to eating horse, as perhaps most Englishmen—except, indeed, the professed hippophagists—have; but hunger overcame all scruples; and I soon acquired quite a taste for this meat.

[538] [535] On this occasion everybody ate where they liked, in their own tables. Casimiro informed me, after the meal was concluded, that there would be a dance in the evening. I looked forward with great anticipation to this 'small and early,' and shortly saw some of the women proceed to collect a considerable quantity of firewood, which was placed outside the tent. Presently, towards dusk, a fire was made, first outside the sacred precincts. The women all sat down on the grass round about, but at some distance from the men, who were all seated on the grass, except four and the musicians. The

• [539] orchestra consisted of a drum made by stretching a piece of hide over a bowl, also a sort of wind instrument formed of the thigh-bone of a guanaco, with holes bored in it, which is placed to the mouth and played, or with a short bow having a horsehair string. When all was ready, some of the old

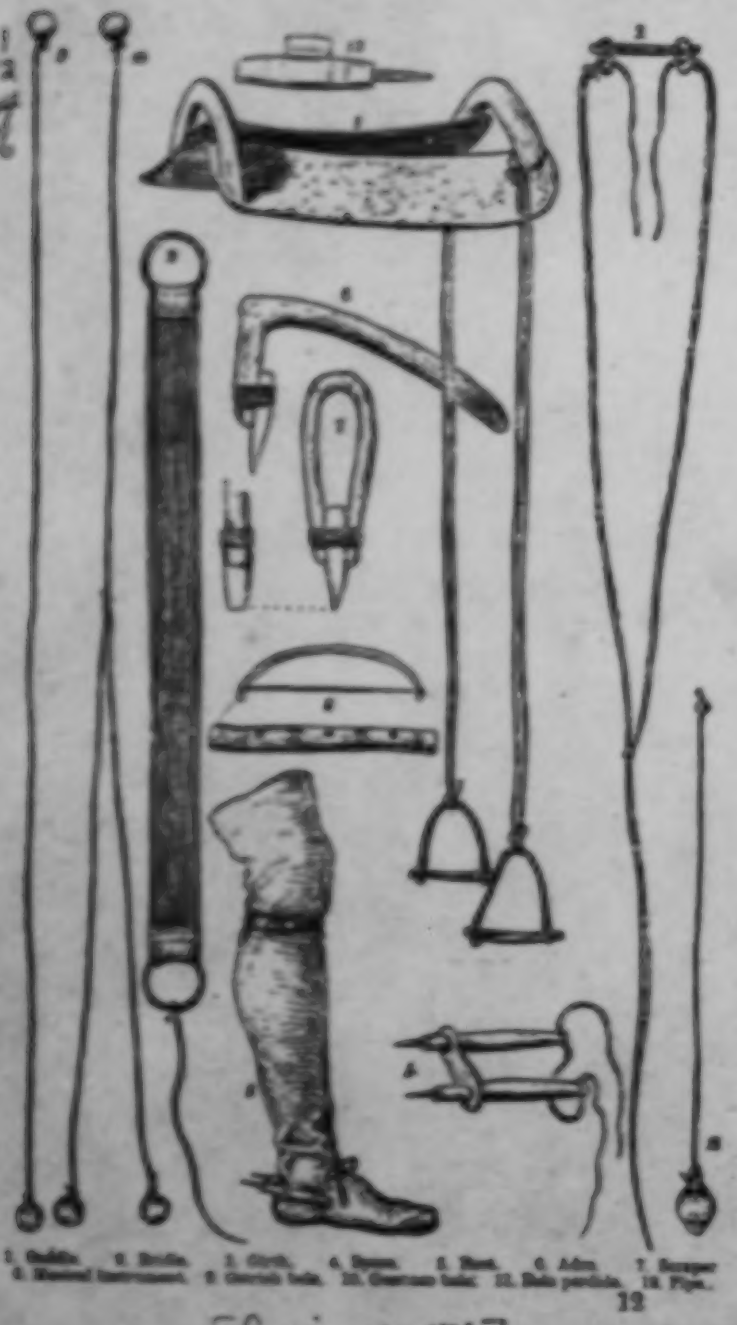
[533] hags all the time singing in their melodious way, the band struck up, and four Indians, muffled up in blankets, so that

[304] their eyes only were visible, and their heads adorned with ostrich plumes, marched into the ring, and commenced pacing slowly round the fire, keeping time to the music. After two or three promenades, the time gradually quickened, until they went at a sort of trot; and about the fifth round, dancing fast to the music, they threw away their mantles, and

[303] exhibited themselves adorned with white paint daubed all over their bodies, each having a girdle of bells extending from

[301] the shoulder to the hip, which jingled in time to their steps. The first four consisted of the chiefs Casimiro, Orkeke, Crimo, and Camilio, who, after dancing with great action (just avoiding stepping into the fire), and bowing their plumed

2: Mustere T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5



[facing A 176]
[No pg 177]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

terns; make the bolsters of reeds (often also ornamented with silver) to place as a protection for their high saddles, cook the food, smash the marrow-bones and extract the grease; take care of the children, and fetch wood, water and do all the 'chores,' as the Americans say. As may be seen, they are pretty nearly always occupied; nevertheless, they occasionally find time to play cards, and sometimes to squabble and talk scandal.

The children generally employ themselves in imitating their elders. The boys play with miniature bolas, and catch the dogs with small lazos, and the girls construct miniature toldos and sit in them; for this purpose they carry off unchecked anything that may seem suitable. Frequently when about to join the chase I had to interfere with these latter games, and recover my saddle-gear, which had been appropriated by the juveniles.

The musical instruments of the Tehuelches have been previously described. In Teckel, besides the native orchestra (fig. 8) and harmonies, to which one had become accustomed, we furthermore rejoiced in a cornet, with music from which Jackechan's brother frequently enlivened our evenings. Many amongst the Tehuelches could blow the ordinary bugle calls which they had been accustomed to hear when in the Rio Negro or at Punta Arenas; and most of them appeared to possess a good ear for music. Their songs, however, are not melodious, and are mere repetitions of words devoid of all sense or meaning. Casimiro informed me that formerly the old men were in the habit of singing the traditions of the tribe and also some sort of prayer. It is much to be regretted that these customs have fallen into disuse. I tried on various occasions to obtain information about their ancestors, but all my efforts were fruitless. When I asked them how their people travelled before horses came into the country, they could not realise the fact that such was ever the case.

There is little to add to the details already given of the

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians SG4

carried on by means of an interpreter (a Valdivian). After a few more questions, some rum was produced, and having taken a glass I mounted and proceeded on my original quest. Hinchel rode a part of the way with me, as he was bound in search of a former acquaintance, whose toldo was pitched about four leagues distant, and who was, he said, the best worker in silver amongst the Indians. I afterwards saw specimens of his handiwork, in the shape of silver tubes for ornamenting stirrup-leathers, and the appearance of these and other silver ornaments made of solid metal in peculiar patterns, evidently of their own devising, left little doubt in my mind that these Indians, or some of the neighbouring tribes, possess the knowledge of the places whence the precious ore is to be obtained, and smelt it themselves.

On returning, after having counted and driven the troop of horses belonging to our party down to the best pasture, I found that Cheoeque had sent several messengers in search of me, so I at once proceeded to his toldo, where I found him and Mariano Linares sitting on two real chairs, the latter playing a guitar, Casimiro slightly inebriated and vowing eternal friendship, and howling Indians, men and women, in various stages of intoxication, all round. Cheoeque shook hands, invited me to a seat, and provided me with a glass of grog out of his own bottle, which it is needless to say was not watered like the remainder. I then took advantage of a slight confusion occasioned by an Indian wishing to embrace Cheoeque, and retired, but was intercepted, and had to drink with various acquaintances before reaching the bivouac. As our fireside was soon occupied by noisy, half-drunken Indians, amongst others Hinchel's son, who, very drunk, had come to get his gun for the purpose of killing the master of the revels, but was fortunately overthrown and bound down by his father, who opportunely arrived, I retired to Foyel's bivouac, where Gravino and others were keeping guard, to be in readiness to look after their chief. He arrived soon after midnight, much to their relief.

3: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1872
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

852 sent to the doctor or wizard of the tribe, and to the cacique and relations. The doctor, after bleeding himself with bodkins, and painting himself white, gives the order for the erection of a tent called by the Indians "the pretty house". The women immediately collect together their mandils, a description of wove blanket, obtained from the Araucanians, and sew them together to form the covering of the toldo; some of the women then place the necessary stakes in the ground to form the toldo, and the young men, taking the mandils, march several times round the stakes to frighten away the devil, the old women singing and crying in a discordant manner, and then draw the covering over the stakes; lancepoles, with brass plates and streamers attached, are placed in front, the whole forming a gay-looking toldo. The men then mount their horses, and after a short interval, mares are brought up and knocked on the head in front of the tent, after which the meat is either portioned out to the several families, or cooked on the spot, all being free to come and eat. To-
852 wards evening a fire is kindled in front of the mandil-tent, and
535 a dance takes place after the following manner: The men and women sit down at the opposite sides of the fire, except the musicians, who sit in the tent; their instruments consist of a
[34] small drum formed by a piece of hide stretched over a bowl, and played on with two sticks, and a wind instrument, formed from the thighbone of a guanaco, with holes bored in it, which is applied to the mouth, and played on with a small wooden bow, having a horse-hair string, after a preliminary tune and howling on the part of the old women. Four Indians, muffled up to their eyes in their mantles, wearing on their heads plumes of the so-called ostrich (*Rhea Darwinii*), step on the scene; they first of all pace majestically round the fire, then quicken their pace to a sort of little trot; after two rounds the time is quickened, they throw aside their mantles, and appear with their bodies naked, except the waistcloth, painted all over, each one wearing also a strap studded with bells, extending from the shoulder to the thigh. At the moment that the mantles are thrown on one side, they dance in quick time to the music in not ungraceful steps, at the same time bowing their plumed heads most grotesquely, in time to the taps of the drum on either side. When tired, they resume their mantles, retire for a drink of water, and then come on again dancing a different step. When they are fatigued, four more take their places, and so on, till all present have had their turn. When many Indians are present, these performances often last until a late hour of the night. The women, who only participate as spectators, mark their applause of any particularly good dancer by a howl which may be considered a sort of encore. I have on one or two occasions known these dissipations carried on for two or three evenings in succession.

able, and it is never uncovered for anyone unless by order of the pseudo-holy man or witch doctor, who may be either a man or a woman. This person ordinarily has to practice his art daily, chanting to the deity to the accompaniment of two gourds filled with pebbles -- a type of music which is as unpleasant as is his own voice. In this manner the witch doctor makes petitions to the deity to the effect that the group's enemies may sicken or die. This often redounds in the witch doctor's undoing for should his incantations be followed by some plague among the enemy, or some chief or important person die amongst them, then the enemy group will try every means to capture the witch doctor and make a devil's martyr of him. The witch doctors must also chant to the deity in intercession for the sick in their own camp in order to overrule the witch doctors among their enemies. If the sick person is not brought back to health the sick one's friends often will give the witch doctor his just deserts, at least by depriving him of his occupation and treating him as of no repute in the future; if the wife or son of a chief should die the witch doctor will often pay for his unsuccessful cure with his life. The witch doctor's curative efforts are limited to chanting, no other medicines being used in the curing of sickness. And so these singing doctors encounter many hardships in their lives, there being but few who die of natural causes, but nevertheless there are always many eager for the job because they can have a free hand with the Indians' wives if the latter are willing, or, if the witch doctor be a woman, she can have relations with the men. There are almost as many witch doctors as there are families because as a rule the head of every household has an idol of his own in his tent, and if the camp is made up of four, five or more families, there are an equal number of witch doctors or pseudo holy men -- let it be remembered that amongst the Indians a family is not composed only of man, wife and children, but also of all of the relatives of the husband who is the family head, and who is therefore a sort of subaltern chief under the one who has general overlordship and property rights to the land.

When someone in the family becomes sick the family witch doctor comes to chant in the person's very ear, in such loud and harsh tones that the sounds alone might be enough to bring about his death. If the patient gets worse [78] the witch doctor invites the participation of others of his profession and all the old women, in order to help him in his chanting; should the patient die no one other than the original witch doctor is held responsible. Once the sick person is completely prostrated, if she be a virgin and young, a tent of ponchos is made for her at some little distance from the camp. She is put into it and there the chanting becomes louder because

6: De Viedma--13 G-6 (1780-1784) 1837 SHS Tehueiche SHS

She is put into it and there the chanting becomes louder because

every available cross joins in and one of them attaches to a stick all the bells she can lay hold of and, making a great noise with them, she takes a turn around the outside of the tent every once in a while, those within redoubling their shouting when this occurs. During the time of the person's sickness mares and horses are slaughtered as an offering or sacrifice to the idol in order to bring about the sick one's recovery; but this offering is then eaten by the invalid and the chanters.

If the invalid should die, either in the new poncho tent if she is a virgin, or in the home tent if it be a man or a married woman, the favorite horse is brought to the tent, is saddled and harnessed, and all the dead person's valuables are placed on it. A boy is then mounted on the horse and made to ride once around the tent in which the corpse is lying. The boy is then taken off the horse and a noose is placed over the horse's neck from the two ends of which two Indians pull until the horse is choked to death. A bonfire being already prepared, the horse's trappings and valuables are hurled into it and the person who heads the funeral proceedings starts to take off all his clothes and all else he has on and hurls them into the fire, and all the deceased's relatives and friends throw some article of clothing into the flames, either a garment which they have brought for the purpose from their tents or else they take off a garment on the spot, each competing with the others as to the value of the articles thrown into the fire, by which they demonstrate greater obligation to the deceased, or deeper friendship, etc. Then they disembowel the throttled horse and the meat is distributed amongst all those who have thrown garments into the fire. The bereaved remains in her tent, completely covered up and silent. All the women relatives and friends go to keep them [sic] company, and in order to do this they cut big locks of hair from their heads so that their hair hangs down over their foreheads up to their eyebrows; they claw their faces, scarify their cheeks, weep even if they do not really feel like doing so, and indulge in wailing and other expressions of sorrow so pitiable and heart-rending that it seems that their very hearts would break. The old crones take over the body at night and bury it where it seems best to them, the whereabouts of the burial place being withheld from the mourners and from all others, and if the old women are asked to reveal the place where the body has been laid they are not allowed to do so. The mourning goes on for fifteen days, with the same moaning, and every day horses belonging to the deceased are slaughtered until not one is left, as all his goods are to be destroyed and cannot be given away to anyone, and nobody would receive them anyway knowing that their owner was dead because this is a sacred matter [77] for them, and inviolable.

[sic, many sick virgins.--Rowlett]

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
814 Abipon 814
Tehuelche SHS
Chiquito SF9
Mbaya SK11

A 123 former customs, raved when they found their 747 medicines laughed at, and the fountain of their (77) gains dried up. The jugglers, who had sucked the bodies, and drained the property of the sick, were despised by their countrymen as a set of worthless drones.

T 752 The Patagonians, and other southern savages, 756 think the body of a sick person to be possessed of an evil demon. Their physicians carry about T drums, with horrible forms depicted on them, [534] which they strike by the sick man's bed, either to consult the demon concerning the nature of the disease, or to drive it from the body of their patient. If any one dies of a disease, the relations persecute the physician most terribly, as T the author of his death. If a Cacique dies, they [166] put all the physicians to death, that they may not fly elsewhere. Actuated by an irrational T kind of pity, they bury the dying before they [763] expire. Father Strobl pulled one man alive from the grave. The Guaycurùs call their phy- M sicians Nigienigis. A gourd filled with hard 756 seeds, and a fan of dusky emu feathers are their chief insignia, and medical instruments, which they always carry in their hands that they may C be known. I must not omit to speak of the phy- 756 sicians of the Chiquitos. A juggler physician, when he goes to visit the sick, fills his belly with the most exquisite dainties, chickens, hens,